

Media Release

Yavapai County Sheriff's Office

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Law Enforcement and Business Owners Ally to Stamp out Synthetic Drug Sales

Law Enforcement agencies from around Yavapai County have initiated a unique program to prevent the sale of synthetic drugs through voluntary cooperation with local business owners. Retail outlets, such as convenience stores and markets, are offered the opportunity to sign a "Synthetic Drug Community Protection Agreement" which requires they cease selling any form of a synthetic drug now and in the future, and also relinquish current synthetic drug inventory to the Sheriff's Office for destruction. An immediate benefit of signing the agreement includes an assurance from the County Attorney's Office that charges will not be sought for any sales occurring prior to the date of signature.

A synthetic drug known as "Spice" made news in recent years as it claimed to provide the same effects as marijuana. The health risks became immediately known as law enforcement saw increased use throughout the State. As a result, "Spice" was banned in Arizona as of February of 2011. Earlier this year, certain synthetic drugs known as "bath salts" were also banned. In recent investigations, law enforcement officials have determined that those manufacturing synthetic drugs are altering the components of the drug to circumvent laws currently prohibiting possession and sales. This program hopes to encourage all retailers to stop offering any form of a synthetic drug product, whether or not its current components/ingredients fall under legal restrictions.

The focus of this program is to cease the sales of these so called "Novelty Powder" drugs regardless of representations made by those who manufacture and distribute them. The drugs, which are being marketed with ever changing names such as "Go Fast," "K2," "Spice," "Spinklezz," "Glass Cleaner," and "Bath Salts," all contain dangerous chemicals harmful and potentially addictive to users. Synthetic drug users can suffer from paranoia, hyperactivity, suicidal thoughts, depression, high temperatures, and high blood pressure. The names may sound pleasant, but the effects on a user can be life-threatening.

County Attorney Shelia Polk recently published an article concerning the dangers of "bath salts." Part of the article documented a story from a Verde Valley mother, wishing to remain

anonymous, who almost lost her teenage daughter to bath salts. She said, "The drug is a horrible, horrible thing. It changed my daughter drastically, mentally and physically. She lost 35 pounds. She was bleeding from her nose and ears. People justify it because it is legal, but it is worse than meth."

The following stores have signed the agreement: *The Prescott Food Store, The Dons, The Black Pearl, The C-Stop, and What You Want*. Additional stores have signed the agreement that desire to remain anonymous. Those retailers wishing to participate in the Synthetic Drug Community Protection program should contact the Partners Against Narcotics Trafficking (PANT) office in Prescott Valley at 928-778-0558 for further details.

More information regarding the dangers of synthetic drugs is available at <http://drugfreeaz.org/newsletter/2012-05/article1> and sponsored by the Arizona Affiliate of The Partnership for a Drug Free America.

If anyone has information on retailers selling synthetic drugs, please contact Yavapai Silent Witness at 1800-932-3232. Callers providing information remain anonymous.

Law Enforcement agencies supporting this program include police departments in Chino Valley, Prescott, Prescott Valley, Cottonwood, Jerome, and Sedona, along with the Yavapai County Sheriff's Office, Camp Verde Marshall's Office, P.A.N.T., Yavapai Apache Nation, Prescott Tribal Police and MatForce.

Citizens can contact the Yavapai County Sheriff's Office with information or questions at

928-771-3260 or the YCSO website: www.ycsoaz.gov